

Minneapolis Pedestrian Advisory Committee Meeting Wednesday, August 7, 2013

Present: Philip Ailiff, Neal Baxter, Jennifer Edwards, Scott Engel, Donna Hemp, Michael Jischke, Jacqueline Knight, Jason Lord, Kathleen Mayell, Don Ostrom, Stefanie Toftey; Mackenzie Turner, Joe Bernard, Rose Ryan, Julie Danzl, Mike Mechtenberg, Shaun Murphy

Chairman Don Ostrom called the meeting to order at 4:05 PM. All present introduced themselves.

Approval of May Minutes

Jennifer moved to accept; approved.

Agency Updates

Julie: the school year begins on Aug. 26 & 28. Julie will attend the National Safe Routes to School conference in Sacramento, Cal., this month. Because they live close to school, 18% of schoolchildren do not ride a school bus to class. This year, parents of these children will receive a note (which Julie passed around) explaining routes to school.

Mike: MetroTransit judged last year's bus pass program for high school children a big success.

Infrastructure & Engineering Subcommittee—Scott Engel

Our committee heard Steve Mosing of Public Works discuss audible pedestrian signals and push buttons. Mosing said the Dept. is adding APS and wants to phase out push buttons at most stoplights. Rose Ryan talked about the Osseo Road project, which will add crosswalk markings, a pedestrian median and more. Work to be undertaken this fall.

The committee will meet July 25 with the team designing the new Vikings stadium.

Rose described the Osseo Road project for the PAC. Osseo loses a traffic lane, adds a left-turn lane and bike lanes.

Michael Jischke moved the following resolution:

The PAC appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on the project. We commend the city and county collaboration to make these improvements. Following are our specific comments:

- The addition of the pedestrian island refuge just north of the Penn Ave./44th Ave. will improve pedestrian crossing safety.
- Include enhanced crosswalk markings at primary pedestrian crossings including: Penn Ave. & 44th Ave, 45th Ave. & Victory Memorial Parkway and other locations as appropriate
- Include audible pedestrian signals and countdown timers at signalized intersections.
- Keep open the potential for sidewalks along the full length of the west side of Osseo Rd in the future.
- Continue coordination with Brooklyn Center which is planning reconstruction of Brooklyn Blvd. immediately to the north to provide continuity in the pedestrian and bicycle network between communities in the future.
- Provide convenient pedestrian access to businesses at Penn Ave./44th Ave. during construction. **Approved.**

The Vikings stadium was also discussed (by the subcommittee). The new stadium will be bigger, and include retail at street level. A 7-acre park will front the west side. The City will vacate 5th St., changing access to Cedar-Riverside. Staff parking, required by the NFL, poses a problem.

Don: the designers are determined not to create the usual “dead zone” around the stadium.

Joe: (in response to Kathleen's question) Yes, parking ramps downtown must have retail at street level. However, the State exempted the stadium from local zoning.

Discussion resulted in the following resolution:

The Minneapolis Pedestrian Advisory Committee has reviewed plans for the new Vikings Stadium, and has the following suggestions for improvements:

- Activate the area around the stadium including adding benches, hiding parking ramps/lots behind retail or offices, and adding streetscape.
- Reconstruct both sidewalks on 6th Street and widen the proposed north sidewalk beyond 10'. Also find ways to narrow the crossings like bump outs and reducing the number of travel lanes.
- Look into more pedestrian friendly ideas for the 190-stall surface parking lot, such as moving it into one of the ramps or hiding it behind a building with a small footprint. Another surface parking lot is contrary to the rest of the plan to create a more urban setting.
- Include access for people with disabilities and work with the Minnesota Multipurpose Stadium Accessibility Advisory Committee to include appropriate design. **Approved. (but modified by e-mail)**

At the next meeting, the Southwest light rail people will talk, Joe Bernard will discuss the Cedar-Riverside sidewalk project and we will hear more about the Central-Nicollet streetcar proposal.

Programs & Policies Subcommittee—Phil Ailiff

The committee heard from Larry Matsumoto about the snow removal pilot. The selected contractor gave up in February, as he was losing his shirt (due to the low rates).

Joe Bernard discussed Overlay Districts, and field walks came up, too.

Jenny: what changes should PAC advocate for the Pilot?

Scott: higher rates for removal, for starters.

Donna: sending ideas to “violators” (where to find volunteers who could remove the snow).

Joe: we also asked for more data about who got the letters—repeaters?

Phil: sending out, in the property tax statement, a list of homeowner responsibilities.

Field walk ideas discussed: Vikings stadium, 7th St. & Olson Highway

PAC Draft Report to City Council—Julia Tabbut

Discussion focused on the non-voting members, esp. those we haven't seen for a while. How to encourage their attendance, and which would be most helpful (Park & Police reps, PAC decided).

West 36th St. Project Update—David Peterson

Reasons for the project: 36th St. features in the Master Plan; has an extra east-bound lane; the bus stops need fixing; and like most graveyards, Lakewood has a gap in its sidewalk.

Plan: a 6-foot sidewalk along the curb, then 2 bike lanes, a line of buffers separating these from traffic.

--Donna: the divide between bike & ped lanes must be tactile and noticeable, a couple of inches high.--

Every crossing will be improved & have curb ramps; the project's pedestrian features are its most costly feature. Bus stops will need tactile warnings, too, as the bus ramp will reach into the ped/bike lanes. Steve Mosing wants to remove the slip turn at Calhoun Pkwy, which boosts speed up the hill.

However, traffic volume there is too high, and the slip turn work would double the project's cost! Work will begin in 2014.

PAC Vacancies—Shaun Murphy

Ten to 15 applications came in, none from the North Side. Appointment as soon as possible.

18th & New Brighton Project—Mackenzie Turner

This a very complex intersection. The New Brighton changes will be in place by August 31.

The Work: at Ulysses, peds will get a sidewalk directly into the Quarry from the intersection; at Arthur, an offset stop sign, zebra markings and stop bars for traffic; at Stinson, the sidewalk gap has been closed, and a new ped crossing at the narrowest point will have a button to push and countdown timers.

Total cost: \$90-100,000.

Pedestrian Fatality on Olson Highway

Noted and lamented. Another argument for drastic change there.

Elections for Subcommittee Vice-Chairs

Kathleen Mayell expressed an interest in serving as vice chair of the Infrastructure Subcommittee.

Approved.

Neal moved to adjourn, Donna seconded. Approved, and adjourned at 6: 05 PM.